

# International Child Development Approach in Zambia

Report by Grace Mwendapole

Save the Children Zambia has been implementing a parenting program that uses the ICDP approach to promote positive parenting.

In 2020 the focus of the program was to increase the uptake of parenting session among identified households through conducting awareness raising activities. Awareness raising activities resulted in the creation of a critical mass of parents and caregivers who received the parenting sessions.

A total of 648 (424 females and 224 males) attended the awareness raising. A total of 574 households were mapped for training in the child sensitivity package. From the mapped households, 500 households were enrolled to receive the whole Child Sensitive Package and this includes the parenting package.

Implementation of the Child Sensitivity Package started in September 2019 and was finalized in October 2020, the aim of the parenting sessions was to increase positive parenting through promoting positive interactions between the caregivers and children.

The parenting sessions were conducted with parents /caregivers with children between the age of 0 to 12 years using the International Child Development Program approach.



## BACK-TO-BACK SESSION DUE TO COVID-19

Despite the parenting sessions coming to a halt when Zambia recorded its first case of the Covid 19 in March 2020 and the resultant enforcement of Government's restriction of public gatherings as a way of mitigating COVID-19, parenting sessions resumed on 26<sup>th</sup> May,2020 using a modified approach of conducting sessions back-to-back and with adherence to protective and preventive measures put in place to prevent exposure to contracting Covid 19.

The "back-to-back session" is an approach where sessions are conducted 3 or 4 days in a roll without skipping a day as opposed to having a session once per week. With this modified model of delivering parenting sessions, the Project Team managed to complete the parenting session, including three additional modules, Gender Transformative, Importance of Education and the Risk of Child Labour by 30th November 2020.

A total of 466 households with a total of 481 participants (336 females and 145 males) out of the targeted 500 households completed the parenting session representing 93 % completion rate.

After completing the parenting sessions, 25 home visits were conducted by facilitators in Kansanta (Chief Shibuchinga) and Kamabaya and Mibenge (Chief Lumpuma). Some of the findings from the home visit revealed positive parenting skills from the caregivers/ parents and families as follows;

- **Improved interactions between caregivers and their children**

For example, one caregiver in Kansanta said:

“Nshalekwata inshita yakwisha nangu ukwangala nabana. Abana tabaleba abakakulwa kaili baletina pantu nshalebakalipila bwino. Panuma yamasambililo nalichinja nokutampa ukukwata akashita. Nabana tabantina eyo, bali abakakuluka ukulanda naine”,

Meaning, she never had time to chat or join her children when they were playing, her children feared her because she would shout at them a lot. She now has created time to play with them.

- **Positive discipline without the use of violence**

One parent in Kansanta, said she appreciated the session on setting limits for children and during the home visit. She revealed that,

“Kunuma ilingiline naishibefye ukukanya umwana nangu ukumupatila pafibi achita chapwa. Nshalekwata inshita yakulandanankwe bwino nangu ukumupandako amano pa fimbi efyo engachita. Nomba ninchinja inshila yakukanishishamo abana pantu nalisambilila”,

meaning, previously I used to shout at the children to manage unwanted behavior. I personally did not know that it was possible to suggest options to children to elicit for positive behavior change in children. The caregiver explained that after attending the sessions, she learnt that, she needs to calmly explain why the behavior in a child is not appropriate and if anything suggests to the child, some alternatives.

During the award presentation ceremony that was done for all participants that completed the 12 sessions of the parenting module, most of the parents were able to talk about the 8 International Child Development Program(ICDP) parenting guidelines and 3 ICDP dialogues that were learnt during the sessions, how they had put them into practice and the skills that they learnt, while the 25 households that were visited also indicated a reduction in violence towards children because parents had improved their interaction with children.

- **Best Practice: participation of couples during parenting session**

One of the best practices noted during the period under review was the participation of couples during parenting session. For example, six couples attended parenting sessions in Kalembula, Filando/Miseshi and Pa Njose, a practice that was being encouraged across the other parenting groups in order to promote male participation as currently there were more female caregivers attending parenting sessions than their male counterparts.